



Magnolia

Magnolia grandiflora
The Laurel Tree of Carolina
Catesby's *Natural History*, 1743

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The Gardens and Yards of African-Americans in the Rural South

by Richard Westmacott, University of Georgia, Athens

Most people would agree that African-American influence in music and in the performing and decorative arts has been enormously invigorating to our culture. Why then have garden designers not looked to black gardens for inspiration?

What are the traditions of African-American gardens? Which of these can be attributed to an African ancestry and which to a process of acculturation? What is uniquely African-American about these places? With a grant from the Research Foundation at the University of Georgia, I went into the countryside to find out more about the gardens and ways-of-life of seventeen old-time residents of one Piedmont Georgia county. Subsequently, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts enabled me to search for cultural continuities and differences in two other

areas of the South, the Low Country in South Carolina and the Black Belt in Alabama.

The gardeners I chose were all more than 50 years of age. They lived in the country all their lives, mostly within a mile or two of their present home and all could remember and describe the yards and gardens of their parents. These memories were very important given the lack of evidence of African-American gardens that exists. Gardens don't survive for long after abandonment. In the spring of 1990, I photographed the yard of a

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*Figure 1
Old Slave Quarters on a
coastal Georgia plantation (St. Catherines
c. 1888, William Wilson
Collection, Hargrett Rare
Book.*

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Calendar

June 11-13, 1992: Landscaping Historic Properties Conference. Murfreesboro, North Carolina. Presentations will be made by Peter Hatch of Monticello, Mac Newsome, Jay Jordan, Bob Hill, and Davyd Foard Hood. Fee is \$119.00 per person. Fee includes a bus tour of Bacon's Castle, Chippokes Plantation, and Berkeley. For registration information call (919) 757-6143 in NC or 1-800-767-9111.

June 13th-19th, 1992: "SEEDS OF TIME: Cultivating New Visions of the Past," the Annual Meeting of AHLFAM (Association for Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums), to be held in Winston-Salem, NC. The theme will explore how ongoing research and visitor expectations influence museum programming. Sessions will address changes in the interpretation and audiences of history, particularly in the context of living history sites. The conference will include hands-on information sharing and a behind-the-scenes look at Old Salem and other sites. For more information, contact: Sue Hanson, Conference Chair, Henrico County

Division of Recreation and Parks, P.O. Box 27032, Richmond, VA 23273. (804) 672-5123.

August 19th-21st, 1992: Historic Landscape Maintenance Workshop. Sponsored by the National Park Service-Midwest Region and The Garden Center of Greater Cleveland, the workshop will be primarily aimed at educating field maintenance personnel from historic sites. A \$55.00 registration fee is due by June 17th. Historic properties will be visited. For further information, contact Regional Historic Landscape Architect Mary Hughes at (402) 221-3426. To request a brochure, call The Garden Center at (216) 721-1600 or write to them at 11030 East Boulevard, Cleveland, OH 44106.

October 9th-10th, 1992: The Fifth Anniversary Celebration of the Southern Garden Symposium, "Exploring Southern Gardens" in St. Francisville, Louisiana. For information, contact The Southern Garden Symposium, P.O. Box 2075, St. Francisville, LA 70775.

Ninth Conference on "Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes"

The ninth biennial conference on "Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes" has been scheduled for October 7th - 9th, 1993 at Old Salem in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The theme will be multicultural influences on southern gardens and landscapes. Selection of speakers and topics is now underway by the conference planning committee. SGHS members are invited to submit their ideas and suggestions to Flora Ann Bynum, conference chair, at the Society's headquarters address.

Southern Garden History Society serves as one of the conference sponsors, along with Old Salem Inc.; the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts in Winston-Salem; the Stagville Center of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, located near Durham; and Reynolda Gardens of Wake Forest University, also in Winston-Salem ♦

Upcoming SGHS Annual Meetings

The eleventh annual meeting of the Society will be held in Washington/Fayette counties in Texas, April 16th-18th, 1993. Dr. William C. Welch is meeting chair and already has plans well underway. This region is one of the richest and most historically significant areas of Texas with regard to gardening, according to Bill Welch. The meeting is scheduled to coincide with the peak of wildflower season, so mark your calendars now.

We return to Virginia for our twelfth annual meeting which will be held in Colonial Williamsburg, May 5th-8th, 1994. Lawrence Henry, Director of Museums, will coordinate this meeting which promises to offer a unique perspective of this well-known historic site.

Even further down the road, past president Dr. Edgar G. Givhan II has offered to host the thirteenth annual meeting in Mobile, Alabama. Dates for this 1995 affair are pending ♦

African-American Gardens *Continued from Page 1*

lady in Cottageville, South Carolina who had just died during Hurricane Hugo. When I returned to the area a year later the house was submerged in a tangled mass of wisteria. African-American gardens have few hard, structural features – walls, steps, etc. – that persist more than a few seasons after abandonment. Gardens are also constantly changing. Gardeners are resourceful people. If something needs doing, they'll be out there doing it, and so vernacular gardens are particularly vulnerable to adaptation and change. Nor is there much evidence, written or photographic, of African-American yards from the past. Frederick Law Olmsted was one of few travelers who mentions slave gardens. Figure 1 shows one of William Wilson's photographs which was taken after the Civil War but which shows what must have been slave cabins on a coastal Georgia plantation with small fenced yards between the buildings. It is not clear if the picket fences kept livestock in or out. Probably out, as the pickets are on the outside of the rails. Roaming livestock are still common and many yards are still fenced to keep animals out. However, photographs of African-American yards before the 1930s are rare and even the Farm Security Administration photos, though very useful, rarely show gardens except as setting or to make a point about living conditions. Figure 2 shows a family who have just moved into their new F.S.A. house in Summerton, South Carolina and the children are sweeping the yard. Arthur Raper, in his studies of Green County, Georgia, estimated that 33.7 percent of the black population in this county in 1936 had lived in their house less than one year and, given these conditions of transiency, it is surprising that anyone had a garden or yard (Raper 1936).

I had always imagined that plantation agriculture would have been utterly strange to slaves, but Littlefield pointed out that many of the same crops had been grown in Africa including rice, tobacco, cotton, and indigo. He estimated that 43 percent of the slaves who were brought to South Carolina in the eighteenth century came from regions of Africa where rice was an import-



ant crop. "In this regard," he wrote, "the Englishman had everything to learn and the African much to teach" (Littlefield 1981, p. 114). But in spite of their knowledge (and presumably, skills) slaves probably got very

little opportunity to practice them on the highly specialized cash-crop plantations. In rice country it might have been different, and Littlefield noted that South Carolina plantation owners actually sought out slaves from rice-growing regions of Africa. It was disappointing, however, in gardens to find row-cropping practiced exclusively and no evidence of cropping practices which may have had some African affinities.

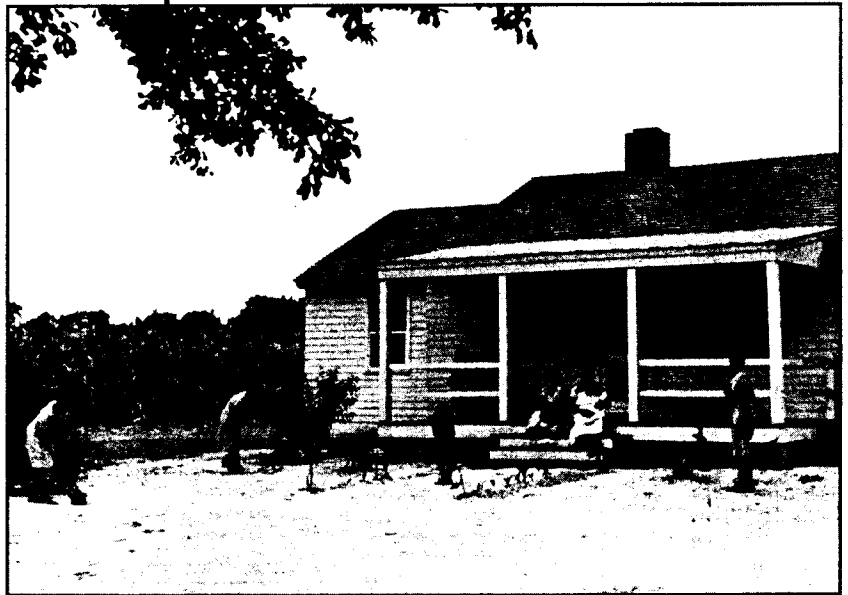


Figure 2
"The Children of Frederick Oliver Sweeping the Yard."
1939, Summerton, SC, Marion Post Wolcott. Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

Until recently the yard was still an important extension to the kitchen. The well-head and the fire were the center for most kitchen tasks. This is still the case when there is no running water in the house. Figure 3 shows Inez Faust's yard shaded by a huge chestnut oak. The well-head is to the left of this frame. There is a pump on the well but no running water in the house. Inez did her cooking and her wash in the yard, and the back porch served many of the functions of an outdoor kitchen. An array of work stations, each for a specific task, was once very common in kitchen yards, but the function of the yard has changed. Indoor plumbing and electric stoves have brought the kitchen into the house from around the well-head and the open fire in the yard.

Livestock were still present on about three-

quarters of all holdings studied but the garden has changed. Although home-grown produce, eggs, and meat are very important in the economies of many families, they are becoming less so as cash incomes increase. Gardens have become smaller, and increasingly gardeners no longer keep livestock. To a small,



Even in the last generation, in spite of the hard work, the yard was also a place where flowers were grown. This was an almost-defiant gesture of graciousness in an otherwise desperately hard life. Like many of the gardeners in this study Dorothy Sanders remembers the flowers in her parents' yard:

She had all kinds of flowers like roses and eastern star lilies and motley roses and running roses. There are some right down there by that old blockhouse, them old red roses. I call them hedge-yard roses; they grow everywhere.

Although plants for ornament around homes were not common in West-African cultures, the use of ornamental plants by African-Americans appears to have distinctive characteristics. Magnolia Moses observes that white people's yards are, as she puts it, "all shaped up." She refers to the widespread use of evergreen foliage shrubs for hedges, foundation plantings, or to enclose a lawn. In contrast, African-Americans treat each plant individually and evergreen foliage shrubs are not popular. Plants are appreciated mostly for their flowers. A walk around Mary Lou Furcron's yard takes one from plant to plant. She tells where she got each one and what it means to her. The plants are mostly widely spaced. The spaces are kept swept with a brush broom. The plan of her yard shows no sign of plants used for hedging, edging, to give formality, or to emphasize spatial structure. In Fox and Juanita Fleming's yard, which is no longer swept, the plants are spaced individually but are arranged roughly in rows. Why? This makes mowing easier.

Sweeping the yard is a traditional practice that is rapidly disappearing. Although it is practiced in

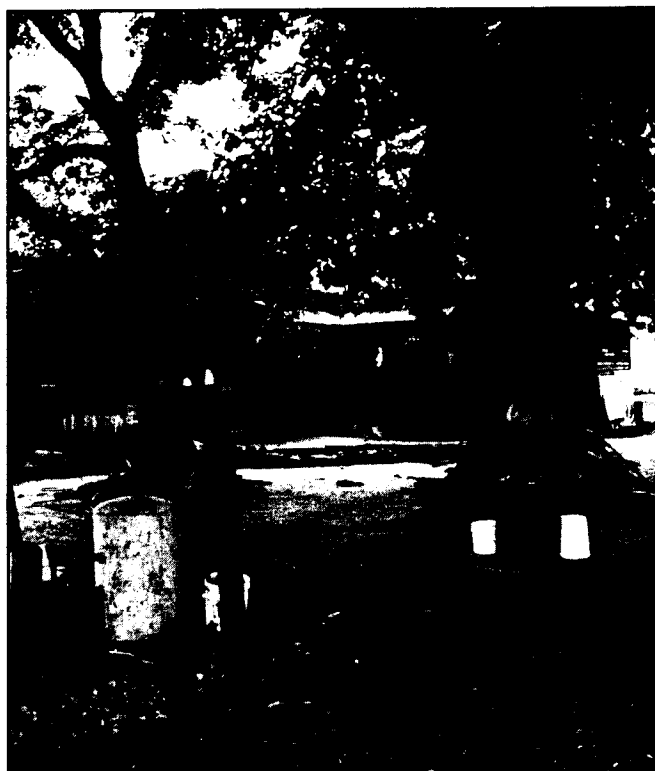


Figure 3
The kitchen yard of Inez Faust, Oglethorpe County, GA.

self-sufficient household, however, chickens and pigs mean much more than eggs and bacon. They consume scraps and surplus produce and convert them into manure that can be applied to the garden. Hog-killing is a community affair. On a bright, cold day in winter several families get together to kill and process the hogs. Few make use of local slaughterhouses because the ears, trotters, lights, and chitterlings are not returned to them. The equipment for processing hogs is a feature of many yards. In Figure 4 the scalding trough, fire pit and cutting table in Magnolia and Andrew Moses' yard can be seen. The yards and pens for animals, usually constructed of reused materials, often look rustic, even ramshackle. All the curious paraphernalia and materials lying around often gives a trashy appearance. These are things that might come in useful sometime in the future. This resourcefulness in the use and reuse of materials is characteristic of small farmers and gardeners everywhere, black and white.



Figure 4
Equipment for scalding and processing hogs in the yard of Magnolia and Andrew Moses, Oglethorpe, GA.

Africa, it is not exclusive to African-American yards although very few swept yards belonging to white families survive. Figure 5 shows Dell Appling in her swept yard in Oglethorpe County, Georgia. Some of these swept yards are extensive. In Georgia and Alabama, brush brooms are made from dogwood. In the Low Country in South Carolina gallberry or sometimes dog-fennel is used. Branches for brush brooms are still collected from the woods, al-



Figure 5
Dell Appling in her swept yard, Oglethorpe County, GA. though the practice of collecting plants in the woods and fields has almost disappeared. Mary Miller remembers:

... and you can believe it or not but all these trees and flowers and things you see around here, I set 'em around with my little boy. We would go in the woods and collect dogwood trees. When the smallest one come from school, we'd hitch up the wagon and take off in the woods, and we would collect trees as much as I could set out while they gone to school the morrow. Sometimes it would be after night getting back up out of the woods because we don't have no light on the wagon, feed the mule and come on in the house. And next



morning they go on into school, I get out in the yard and set them out.

Color is very important. Most yards contain colorful annuals and perennials. Sadie Johnson comments:

Black people's yards have more flowers in the summer. The white people have more flowers that bloom in the winter because they have more shrubberies and trees and things, and the colored people's have more "weedy" flowers that die in the winter. You call it weedy flowers like zinnias, marigolds, bachelor buttons, all that. They aren't really able to buy these expensive shrubberies. They just get a packet of seeds and plant 'em.

Evia Gaines' yard in Hartwell, Georgia, however, contains a profusion of shrubs, perennials, vines, and annuals – but each grown and admired as individuals (Figure 6). Gardeners like to edge flower beds with field stone or bricks. Snuff bottles were also popular in the past and are still



Figure 6
Evia Gaines' yard, Hartwell, GA.

occasionally seen. Sarah Johnson remembers her mother, "she would save those jars and put them along the walkway in the front. And it was the most beautiful little walkway that I've ever seen.

People would admire it and come out and see it." Ozell Blunt's walkway through her swept yard is mostly edged with soda bottles. Containers for plants are also very common – livestock troughs, wash tubs, and inside-out tires. Figure 7 shows Walter Cox's yard in Oglethorpe County, Georgia. This photograph



and the husks that come from the corn, he used to feed the hogs. [We had] hogs, chickens, cows. We had milk, butter; he also planted sugar cane; he'd make syrup . . . In the garden it was collards, green peas, butter beans, tomatoes, okra, corn, sweet corn, and then we had a lot of fieldcorn . . . that was for the hogs and for the horses.

Sadie Johnson says, "I eat what I make and I make what I eat." Until recently Sadie and her husband Jacob operated a farm on the edge of Greensboro, Alabama. Today they



Figure 7
Walter Cox's yard, Oglethorpe, GA.

taken in early spring shows two washtubs, a porcelain sink, and a chicken feeder arranged around the chimney. All contain flowers during the summer.

Until very recently all small farms in the South had mules. Ownership of a mule distinguished renters from sharecroppers. Owners and renters would have had a mule barn and these buildings are still common on small farmsteads. Some are standing empty; others are used for machinery, but many have collapsed. The use of draft animals favors row cropping and probably discouraged the adoption of more intensive cropping patterns found in the humid tropics. Some of the farmers and gardeners in this study still use a mule or a horse, but it is rare. A change that has resulted from the disappearance of mules is that fertilizers have replaced manure to maintain soil fertility. Children also miss having a mule to ride.

Yards and gardens were seen as symbols of resourcefulness and self reliance. Many of the parents of the gardeners in this study had been owners or renters and the level of self-sufficiency that they managed to achieve is a source of great admiration. Ida Rhanes remembers:

Back when my father was living, he used to plant rice, wheat, he used to plant corn. From the corn we got grits and corn meal,

have a large garden. Chickens are the only farm animals they still keep, but she takes great pride in her self-reliance and her resourcefulness. "When I lay down," she says, "my thoughts get up." The signs of resourcefulness are everywhere in these



Figure 8
Display of plants, Emma and Isaac Mitchell's yard, Oglethorpe County, GA.

yards and gardens; Mary Lou Furcron built her own house.

Flower yards and decorated porches are a gesture of welcome, an invitation to stop and visit. Figure 8 shows a display by the road in Emma Mitchell's yard. A favorite way to enjoy the yard is to sit in the shade and greet passers-by. Sitting areas are, therefore, located in a shady spot that commands a view of the road; a spot from which passing cars can be greeted with a wave and a shout. If there is no suitable shade tree, the front porch is used.

The flower yard is not a symbol of leisure, rather of sociability and graciousness. It signifies that work is not so pressing that visitors are unwelcome. Although leisure time might be spent sitting in the yard, many gardeners admit that they have a hard time staying seated for long. They jump up and go and pull a weed or two. The gesture of invitation offered by these rural yards is very different from inward-looking urban yards where privacy and separation from the street are often criteria in their design.

Gardeners are very aware of the importance of manure in providing nutrient and in improving soil structure. Lucille Holley's chicken house (on the left in Figure 9) was designed and built in the 1930s by students from the Tuskegee Institute. Lucille says, "I use the manure from my chickenhouse. We have a litter board in there (under the roost), and you can go in and take it off real easy. And I use that in my garden." Mary Miller plants grain for the chickens in her yard. In fact, she has two fowl yards that she rotates.

Several gardeners express alarm at the use of pesticides. Lisco Fields says, "I would imagine that's why people are so sickly today with these chemicals on the plants. Way back, all your food was just the natural stuff, you know; nothing was added on, no chemicals." James Colleton says, "Most time now, people run a race to see how fast you can come in, regardless of the chemicals . . . we don't hardly spray [the greens] because, we say, all of that chemical, you eat it regardless. The dew wash it off, the rain wash it off, but you still



eat a whole lot of it." Sadie Johnson also attributes her mental sharpness to her garden. She says, "It keeps you healthy and it keeps your mind together. Other people have to go to the creek to get their minds together. I don't have to go nowhere."

Ellen and Herbert Bolton, like many others, grow far more produce than they need. "I love to have something to share," says Ellen. Their garden is a symbol of their commitment to their community. Many others express similar sentiments. Thomas Evans' garden is carefully cultivated and tended and is indicative of his commitment to his family. The security of tenure, symbolized by the garden, is also valued very highly. James Colleton says, "I ain't never been to heaven, but I'd rather have this here outside anything I know. I can do



*Figure 9
Lucille and Leland Holley's barn and chicken house,
Hale County, AL.*

anything I want to. All of it's mine. Nothing can be more enjoyable; chickens crowing, get the eggs, eat the eggs, kill the chickens and eat the chicken and go on according to the year."

Every person in this study has vivid memories (not all unpleasant) of working long hours in the field. Some have built their own homes and most have constructed animal pens and shelters. Two have hand-dug their own wells. Self-sufficiency, resourcefulness, and hard-work go hand-in-hand. James Paige recognizes that his work ethic is attributable to his upbringing on the land. "You couldn't get anyone who hadn't come out of a farming family to do it. I do it, you see, because I love it." The same is true for Lucille Holley, but for her, owning the land is necessary to derive pleasure from working it. "I was raised with the work and I enjoy it. Used to truck farm and it

would call for before-day and after-night a lot of times, but I was doing it for myself and I didn't mind. It was mine."

Even the flower yard is a place of work, but pleasurable work. Janie Pinkney says, "I be in the yard practically everyday doing a little something with a hoe or a rake or whatever. I enjoy doing that. I try to get my housework done and make it on outside. I go on over to my daughter's house and get in her yard and work there too." Several gardeners spoke of "watching," not "looking at" their yards. Watching implies that change is imminent and change necessarily involves adaptation and work; but the changes and the work are anticipated with pleasure. All real gardeners derive pleasure from



working in the garden. These gardens are gardener's gardens in which the gardeners love to garden ♦

[This article is based on a book *The Gardens and Yards of African-Americans in the Rural South* to be published by the University of Tennessee Press in Fall 1992.]

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 Raper, Arthur. 1936. *Preface to Peasantry*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

TRYON PALACE RESTORATION

TRYON PALACE UNCOVERS NEW 18TH-CENTURY EVIDENCE

A recently found map and written description of Tryon Palace and its gardens may be the most important research find for the New Bern historic site in over thirty years, according to staff members there. The map offers the first solid evidence as to the layout of the grounds surrounding the government house constructed for Royal Governor William Tryon between 1766 and 1770. The manuscript description gives much new information regarding architectural details and room uses inside the main building and flanking wings.

These documents suggest that the home of North Carolina's eighteenth-century royal governors was truly deserving of the epithet "the capital [i.e., finest] building on the continent of North America." Chimney pieces and interior trim were apparently made in the most fashionable taste and from rich materials. The description also sheds light on the use of service areas such as the cellars, the stable, and the kitchen wings, portions of the house that are not well documented elsewhere.

The text of the four-page description, written by English-trained Palace architect John Hawks, is as follows:

The inclos'd is an Original sketch of the situation of the House and Gardens for the residence of the Governor or Commander in chief for the Province of North Carolina.

It was agreed for the advantage of a prospect down the river, that the South

front should be thrown more to the Eastward which leaves the Gardens not quite so regular as appears in the sketch. The opening or entrance from Pollok street is likewise much wider than here described. The present fence now ranges with the inside fronts of the two Offices, And the Circular fence to form a Court yard which was to be China or Iron railing with a pair of Iron gates is now totally abolished.

The dimensions of the House exclusive of the projection in each front is 82 by 60 feet. The principal floor divided into seven rooms and two staircases.

To the left or N.E. angle is a Library 22 by 16 feet. The Chimney piece of Philadelphia marble, a mahogany fixed Book case, pedestals on the dado to receive the Window architraves, Caps over the doors, and a solid dentil double Cornice to the room.

To this Joins the Council room at the E. end or S.E. angle 36 by 23 feet. The walls are covered with modern wainscot with a Carved enrichment in the Base and Sur Base, each window Architrave forms a scrole at Bottom and is supported by a pedistal, over the doors are flat Caps with contracted swelling Friezes, and the Ionick Entablature complete— finishes to the cieling, the Chimney Cap or shelf is of statuary marble fully inriched and supported

by two Ionick Columns of Siana marble, on the Tablet in the Center is an Urn in Bas relieve with foliages, to the Frieze is a Siana fret laid in statuary and a Bust of the King over one Column, and Queen over the other in mozzo [i.e., mezzo] relievo at each end of the Frieze; the Ornaments over the marble Chimney Commonly called Tabernacle Frame consists of Corinthian Columns and pillasters fluted with the proper Entablature fully inrich[ed] and an open pediment. The quality of the floor is not [the] most inconsiderable part of this room.

In the center of the South front is the drawing room 26 by 18 feet. The Chimney of plain statuary marble with a frame for a picture or Land scape over it, the Base and Sur Base inriched with fret work, kneed architraves to the windows, pediments [and] Caps to the doors, and the cieling Coved, this is allowed the most light and Airy finished room in the House

The dining room in the S.W. angle is 28 by 22 feet and wainscoted with a plain molding and flat pannel, Architraves and Caps to the doors and windows as before, and a double cornice with a dentil Bedmould to the Cieling, the Chimney piece of black and white Vein'd marble over which is a frame with an Ogee scrole pediment.

The Center room at the west end is about 16 by 12 feet, for the Housekeeper, and the room at the N.W. angle 22 by 14 feet (on the right hand of the Hall at entrance) for the Steward or Butler.

The hand rail, Baluster and Carved Brackets to the best staircase are of mahoginy, the steps and risers of fine grain clear pine, the light is conveyed to this staircase by a sky light 9 feet diameter of an octagon plane or [?] domical section, and finishes with a cove at the foot of the skylight from the center of which is a Chain for a shandelier, The Back staircase which is likewise in the Center of the House receives its light from a hiped skylight, to these staircases all the rooms in the one pair of stairs or Bedroom floor one excepted have a Communication.

The Basement story consists of apartments for the use of the Butler[,]



Housekeeper and Cellering &c, and is 7 ft. 6 Ins. only in the clear. The principal story 15 feet high in the clear, and the upper or Bedroom story 12 feet high in the clear.

In the center of the North front a pediment spans 32 feet, in the Tympan of which is the Kings Arms in alto relievo, and attributes painted, a Block Cornice finishes this pediment and Continues round the house with a parrapet wall and an Ornament vause [i.e., vase] at each corner Brake and center of the pediment, a Lead Gutter to recieve the water from the In and outside of the roof also runs round the Building with 6 stacks of Lead pipes to convey the water into drains which lead to Reservoirs. An Ionick portico Frontispiece to the North front and a range of Iron palisadoes from this to each Circular Colonade.

The Kitchen and stable Offices are each 50 by 40 feet. [In] the one is a kitchen[,] servants Hall[,] cooks Larder [,] Scullary [and] Brew house, the one pair of stairs in this Office are a Laundry and three good Bedrooms. In the other Office are two la[rge] stables and a coach House and Bedrooms for the servant employed in the stables and Lofts for hay or fodder &c

North Carolina
New Bern 12 July 1783
J. Hawks

According to the map accompanying this description, the grounds of the governor's house were very different from the Colonial Revival gardens laid out during the reconstruction of Tryon Palace in the 1950s. Four large French-style parterres originally occupied the entire area between the Palace and the Trent River. These parterres were divided by wide paths and intersected on a "Dyal" in the center of the garden. The formal grounds were separated from the Trent River by a wall, perhaps ornamented with pillars. In the center of the wall was a recess for steps leading down to a boat landing.

The kitchen gardens stretched on both sides of the Palace and the two wings (marked "Kitchen Offices" and "Stables &c"), except for the carriage yard west of the stables. North of the Palace were two large grassy areas. The avenue from the

Palace to Pollock street was lined by trees in a manner quite similar to the current landscaping plan.

The saga of these documents, as well as the search for them, is almost as interesting as the information they contain. In June 1783, New Bern was visited by Francisco de Miranda, a native of Venezuela taking the grand tour of the new United States. During his stay, Miranda was particularly struck by the Palace as a building that



accepted "an exact plan of [the] edifice and gardens which gives a clear idea of the whole." Miranda filed away the plan in his papers and continued with his tour, which eventually took him to Charleston, Philadelphia, New York, New England, Great Britain, and Russia.

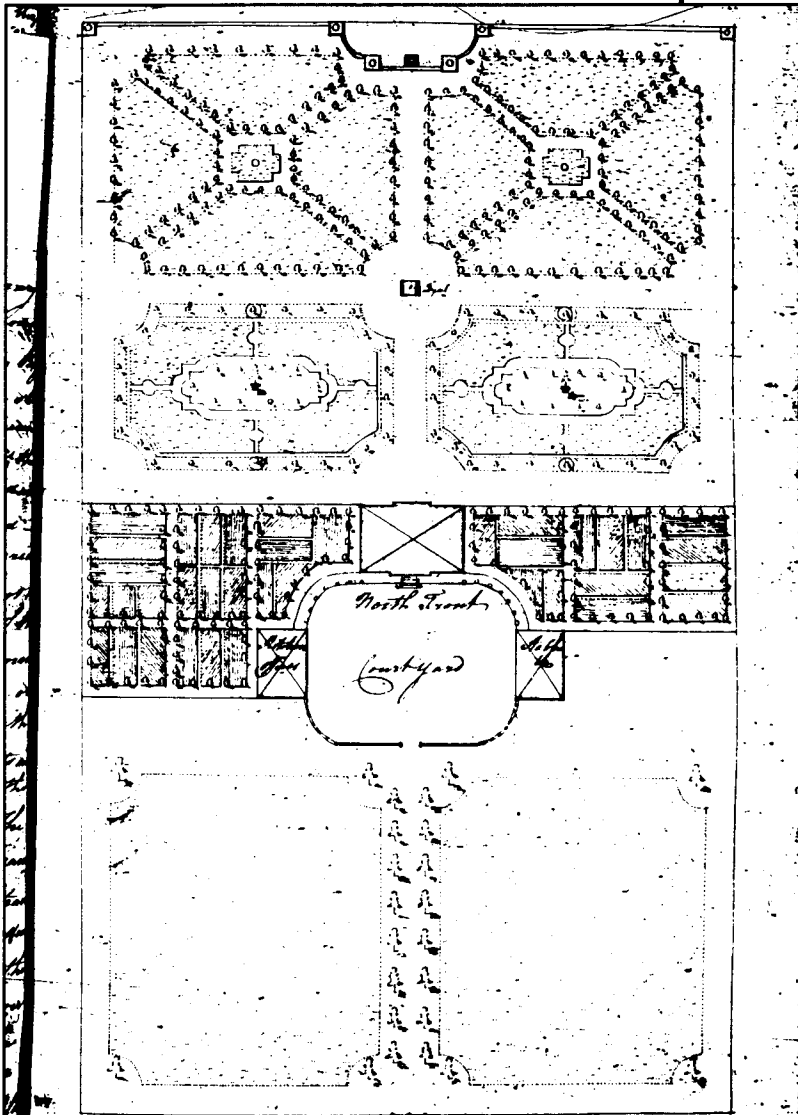
Miranda settled in London until 1810, but returned to Venezuela after that colony began its rebellion against Spanish rule. A signer of

Venezuela's Declaration of Independence in 1811, Miranda became a leader in the new government and led the fight against Spanish counter-revolutionary forces. His government failed, however, and Miranda was forced to surrender to the Spanish in July 1812. He died in a Spanish prison four years later. Just prior to his defeat, Miranda sought to secure his papers by placing them in the custody of an English ship captain. Eventually they wound up in the hands of the Secretary of War and the Colonies in London, but were lost for much of the nineteenth century. In the 1920s, 63 folio volumes of Miranda's papers were discovered in a private British archives and purchased by the Venezuelan government. The papers are now part of the collections of the Academia Nacional de la Historia in Caracas.

Researchers for the Tryon Palace Commission knew of these documents in the 1950s, but efforts to obtain copies at that time failed. A renewed effort by a team of Tryon Palace staff members began last summer. A bilingual staff member was able to communicate the research request to librarians in Caracas who located the documents on microfilm. After that, a free lance researcher in Caracas

obtained copies of the documents and sent them by express courier to New Bern. In the middle of these proceedings, Venezuela was shaken by a military coup attempt, which disrupted services in all of Caracas, especially in the inner city where the libraries in question are located.

Finally, the documents made their way into the hands of Tryon Palace staff members, who are now incorporating the information into their plans for future refinements in interpretation ♦



Plan of Tryon Palace and Grounds, c. 1783. Plan from the papers of Francisco de Miranda; photograph courtesy of Academia Nacional de la Historia, the Biblioteca Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela, and Tryon Palace.

really merited "the educated traveler's attention." He struck up an acquaintance with the architect of the Palace, John Hawks, who had remained in New Bern following Tryon's departure in 1771. Miranda was quite pleased with Hawks' company ("he has an admirable character") and gratefully

Gleanings for a Southern Gardener

Farewell to a Sylan Monarch

A recent New York Times article by garden columnist Allen Lacy paid tribute to the demise of Montrose Nursery's famed and magnificent cucumber magnolia (*Magnolia acuminata*). On March 11th, in a moderate wind, the declining and badly leaning tree fell to the ground, killing its nesting birds and damaging a nearby fir.

For those of us who have never visited Montrose Nursery in Hillsborough, North Carolina, Lacy's tribute inspires regret for a pilgrimage never made to stand in the presence of this 250-year-old giant, surely one of the oldest and largest of its kind in North America. The nursery, now owned by Craufurd and Nancy Goodwin, is part of a historic property dating back to the early nineteenth century, when it was home to several generations of the Graham family, including Governor William A. Graham of North Carolina. The spacious grounds are graced with numerous magnificent trees including hemlocks, white oaks, and a deodar cedar. The Goodwins today consider themselves stewards of this site where, according to Lacy, "its true owners are not human beings but trees."

Of the cucumber magnolia, the emblem of Montrose, Lacy continues, "This tree, I believe, was a dance, perhaps of the god Siva, perhaps of the tree gods my Druid ancestors worshiped centuries ago. It was more than a tree. It was endowed with energy that bordered on something beyond the natural order." Its remains were removed by five workers with chainsaws and forklifts and placed in the nearby woods to decompose and enrich the soil, and perhaps to be taken, bit by bit, by those who admired it and mourn its loss ♦

A Southern Garden Returns

One of America's most eloquent garden writers, Elizabeth Lawrence, is featured in the May



issue of *Southern Accents* as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the first printing of her classic work, *A Southern Garden*. Today her publisher, the University of North Carolina Press, is commemorating this event with an anniversary edition, illustrated with newly commissioned watercolors by artist Shirley Felts and a new forward by garden designer Edith Eddleman of Durham, North Carolina.

Ms. Eddleman and garden designer Doug Ruhren have already honored Miss Lawrence by designing the Elizabeth Lawrence Border at the North Carolina State University Arboretum in Raleigh, where they are growing many of her favorite flowers. In the introduction to the new edition, Eddleman writes, "No one I know of has ever written so well or so warmly about gardening. *A Southern Garden* and Elizabeth's other books are the map by which I have plotted my own course as a gardener."

Plans are underway for an Elizabeth Lawrence symposium in October. For information, contact Catherine Knes-Maxwell, NCSU Arboretum, P.O. Box 7609, Raleigh, NC 27695-7609 or call (919) 515-3132.

SGHS members will recall that Elizabeth's personal library is housed at the Cherokee Garden Library in Atlanta ♦

Act Now

A March 6th, 1992 summary of congressional legislative activity indicates that a new category of funding for the Surface Transportation Program (STP) requires states to spend at least \$3 billion over the next six years on transportation enhancements. Areas meeting the criteria for transportation enhancement include scenic or historic highway programs, the acquisition of scenic easements for scenic or historic sites, landscaping or other scenic beautification projects, and archaeological planning and research. The money is there, waiting for responsible use. Write or contact your congressional representatives today for more information and to voice your views regarding The Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (S. 1204), Public Law (PL) 102-240.

The 10TH Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society . . . remembered. . .

The Society's tenth anniversary, celebrated in Charleston, South Carolina, was indeed a memorable affair. A record attendance of over 200



members logistically challenged the conference coordinators, led tirelessly every step of the way by the team of Hugh and Mary Palmer Dargan. Initially, it seemed even the weather conspired to disrupt the assembly, pelting members en-route to the city with torrential thunderstorms and turning unseasonably cold and damp for our first round of walking tours. But, by Saturday, the elements were in good form, making for a spectacular day of tours through some of the area's most significant historic sites.

The following photographs, supplied by Ben Page, Ken McFarland, Mary Palmer Dargan, and Peggy Newcomb help recapture some of the moments of this unforgettable meeting +



In the Saturday morning sunshine, conference host Mary Palmer Dargan assembles four bus loads of participants for a day of plantation tours along the Ashley River north of Charleston. (Right)

George McDaniel, director of Drayton Hall, gives SGHS members an overview of this National Trust property. (Left)



On the brisk evening of Friday, March 20th, members toured 17 intimate gardens in the heart of downtown Charleston. Here, in the Heyward Washington House gardens, biennial stock (Matthiola incana) blooms magnificently.



Charles Duell, director of Middleton Place, prepares members for a walking tour of the plantation following a picnic lunch.



Hugh and Mary Palmer Dargan describe the former splendour and current state of Crowfield Plantation. Through the perseverance of garden historians and archaeologists, vestiges of this site were spared from total annihilation by an 18-hole golf course.



83-year old Richmond Bowens, a direct descendant of slaves who worked at Drayton Hall, is gatekeeper and current focus of archaeological research now underway at this site. His first-person account of his family home site and gardens will help to shape the text of future walking tours of Drayton Hall's plantation setting. Bowens' great grandfather, Ceasar Bowens, was brought here by the Draytons from Barbados where he remained with his family after slavery. This season archaeologists will excavate Bowen's home site and produce a topographic survey of the African-American cemetery nearby. (Above Left)



Beneath the spreading Middleton Oak, members stroll reverently in the shade of this ancient survivor. (Above)



Members among the ruins at Crowfield. (Above)

Drayton Hall waits in emptiness. (Left)

Of Interest

Garden Literature Press has announced that it is publishing *Garden Literature: An Index to Periodical Article and Book Reviews* which indexes over 100 journals, newsletters, newspapers, and annuals of interest to gardeners, garden designers, growers and retailers, historians, horticulturists, landscape architects, preservationists, and all those who work in and enjoy the plant world. The first issue was scheduled for April of 1992 and those interested should write Garden Literature Press, 398 Columbus Avenue, Suite 181, Boston, MA 02116 ♦

Specimen jars of preserved frogs and snakes share the spotlight with 18th-century botanical prints and ceramics in the latest exhibition at Colonial Williamsburg's DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Gallery. "Images of Nature, Creations of Man: Natural History and the Decorative Arts" features 200 objects with designs inspired by society's growing awareness of nature during the 17th and 18th centuries. The items are drawn from Colonial Williamsburg's collections of English and American decorative arts. A section of botanical prints and decorative objects features ceramics, such as leaf dishes and plant-inspired dessert plates. Other items include textiles with flowery designs, paintings, and metals. The "Science and



Enlightenment" area recreates the study of an 18th-century naturalist - down to the preserved amphibians and reptiles. It also highlights natural history publications with a first edition copy of *The Natural History of*

Carolina by Mark Catesby. The garden section showcases material on colonial gardens, with an emphasis on Williamsburg. Objects include gardening tools, flower pot fragments, and plant specimens excavated in Colonial Williamsburg, documents, and prints illustrating landscape gardening. The exhibition continues through June 1993 and more information can be obtained by calling (804) 220-7724 ♦

A quarterly newsletter in which SGHS members who save heirloom or open-pollinated seeds will be interested is *The Historical Gardener: Plants and Garden Practices of the Past*. Write editor and publisher Katherine McClelland, 2910 West Michigan Avenue #111, Midland Texas, 79701 for more information ♦

Dr. Anne Yentsch announces the start of an intermittently appearing (but free) newsletter that will focus on what archaeology can tell of buried gardens and landscapes around the world. Please send your name and address to Dr. Anne Yentsch, Landscape Archaeology Research Associates, 500 Brown Pelican Drive, Daytona Beach, FL 32119 to receive an issue ♦

Members in the News

The April 1992 issue of *American Horticulturist* featured SGHS member **Julia Andrews Bissell's** garden in Aiken, South Carolina. The property, known as Louviers, is a twelve-acre private retreat which is primarily a spring garden containing camellias and azaleas. Other shrubs, wisteria, and laurel have been on the property as long as seventy years. Flowering quince, antique roses, bamboo, and Japanese apricot can also be found on the property. Louviers is open in the spring by written appointment only. Write to Mrs. Alfred Bissell, P.O. Box 587, Aiken, SC 29801.

Southern Living's April 1992 issue features an article, "Rediscover Antique Roses" which focuses on SGHS member **Mike Shoup's** Antique Rose Emporium. The article also mentions his coauthor and other SGHS member **Liz Drutt** and their recently published book *Landscaping with Antique Roses*. The Rose Emporium is a site we'll

visit in 1993 during our Annual Meeting.

The same issue of the magazine also contains pictures of iris in the garden of SGHS board member **Anne Carr**.

The Creole Plantation of **Jack and Pat Holden**, visited by SGHS members during the 1991 annual meeting in Louisiana, is featured in the recent May issue of *Southern Accents*. The extensive article examines both the house and gardens of this re-created 1790s Louisiana home- stead, Maison Chenal. Also featured in this issue of *Southern Accents* is a story on the gardens of Oatlands Plantation, managed by SGHS member and gardener **Jill Winter**.

Reynolda Gardens, a new Institutional member of the Society, is featured on the front cover of the April/May issue of *North Carolina Homes and Gardens*. The June issue contains a story on the gardens of **Old Salem** with contributions by Old Salem's director of horticulture **Darrell Spencer** ♦

New Officers Selected at Spring Board Meeting

Florence Griffin of Atlanta, Georgia was elected president of the Society at the annual business meeting held Saturday morning, March 21st, in Charleston. Mrs. Griffin will serve for two years, from May 1st, 1992 until April 30th, 1994. She was the Society's first secretary-treasurer for a two-year term, and has served on the board of directors continuously since the Society was formed.

Officers elected in addition to Mrs. Griffin were Ben G. Page, Jr., of Nashville, Tennessee as vice-president, and Flora Ann L. Bynum of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, who continues as secretary-treasurer. William Lanier Hunt, of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, is honorary president.

Board members elected for a two-year term were Anne C. Carr, Atlanta; Hugh G. Dargan, Charleston, South Carolina; Judith C. Flowers, Dublin, Mississippi; Dr. Edgar G. Givhan, Montgomery, Alabama; Glenn L. Haltom, Natchez, Mississippi; Peter J. Hatch, Charlottesville, Virginia; Catherine M. Howett, Athens, Georgia; M. Edward Shull, Catonsville, Maryland; Jane Symmes, Madison, Georgia; Suzanne L. Turner, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Dr. William C. Welch, College Station, Texas; and Shingo Woodward, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Ex-officio board members are Harriet Jansma, Fayetteville, Arkansas, immediate past president; and Peggy C. Newcomb, Charlottesville, editor of *Magnolia*.

Mary Helen Ray of Savannah, Georgia, the annual meetings committee chair, presented to the board meeting copies of a booklet designed to aid in the organization of future annual meetings. It provides specific outlines, timetables, and detailed instructions compiled from the experiences of past annual meeting coordinators, including Mary Helen herself. This will be an invaluable resource for meeting organizers.

Board rotation, revision of the by-laws, and a permanent headquarters for the Society were also discussed at length at the Spring board meeting ♦



Garden Travel

The board of the Cherokee Garden Library announces a two-week tour to Brazil to see the Tropical Gardens of Roberto Burle Marx concentrating on his major creations in Sao Paulo, Brasilia, and Rio de Janeiro. In Sao Paulo the tour will visit the Banco Safra and its dramatic mosaic garden which Burle Marx completed in 1982, and also the Sao Luiz Participacoes and the Iguacu Falls. The group will tour by coach Brasilia, where the landscapes were designed and completed by Burle Marx. In Rio, a full day of sightseeing will be centered on Flamengo Park which Burle Marx began landscaping in 1954. Two days will be spent in the company of Mr. Burle Marx as he shows private estates he has created outside Rio which are not otherwise open to the public. The culmination of the trip will be lunch on his own 200-acre estate at Guaratiba and a tour of his own gardens. The trip starts in Atlanta on July 4th and will return on July 19th. It will be conducted by John Everett and is limited to a maximum of 34 people. If you have any questions call Mrs. Charles K. Wright (Edie) at (404) 892-9714, between 4 and 6 p.m. only ♦

In Print

The Heirloom Garden: Selecting and Growing Over 300 Old-Fashioned Ornamentals by Jo Ann Gardner, recently published by Storey/Garden Way Publishing. Includes concise histories and descriptions of a wide variety of plants well-suited to North American gardens, as well as tips on preserving endangered heirlooms.

Landscaping with Antique Roses by Liz Druitt and G. Michael Shoup. Copies are \$34.95. Published by *Fine Gardening*, Taunton Press. P.O. Box 5506, Newton, CT 06470-5506. Toll-free number: 1-800-283-7252, ext. 251. (Review of this book and an article by Ms. Druitt will be in the next issue of *Magnolia*.)

Copies of the Tenth Annual Meeting booklet and the Garden Tour Booklet are still available for \$15.00, which includes postage and handling. Contact Hugh and Mary Palmer Dargan, P.O. Box 357, Charleston, SC 29402; (803) 723-0942.

Change in Membership Dues

The Society's Board of Directors voted to increase membership dues at its Spring meeting in Charleston. Individual memberships were increased from \$15 a year to \$20, and dues for joint (husband-wife) and institutional or business memberships were increased from \$25 to \$30 annually. All other dues categories remain the same.

Notices for dues for the 1992-93 year will be mailed in June. Notices for the 1991-92 year were mailed last July and reminder notices in February. The Society's year runs from May 1st to April 30th.

Members having questions about their dues may write the Society's headquarters ♦

Magnolia's New Look

We've received many positive comments about the new format for *Magnolia*, and we appreciate your feedback. Your input is vital as we continue making improvements in the style and content of *Magnolia*. We would appreciate your articles and news items at least two weeks before the next deadline, which is August 1st ♦



Research Material Available

George Stritikus of Montgomery, Alabama informs us that he has recently compiled and indexed a wealth of materials he has gathered over the years during his tenure as Montgomery County Agent through Auburn University. Included are "Plant Material Indexes" which pull out plant references in source documents and list them for easy reference. Topics range from an 1836-37 herbarium compiled by John C. Jenkins at Elgin plantation in Natchez, Mississippi to the "new" plants grown by Thomas Affleck as listed in his 1854 evaluation of the *Southern Garden*. Other items include "An Early (1813-15) List of Bulbous Plants Associated with the Leconte Plantation at Woodmanston, Georgia" and fact sheets reporting on Mr. Stritikus' original research on the 1843 installation of the Battle-Friedman yard by the gardener of Lord Ashburton.

The entire package is available for \$10, which covers the cost of duplication and postage. To order, please make a check payable to G. Stritikus, P.O. Box 250005, Montgomery, AL 36125-0005 ♦

Florence P. Griffin, *President*
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Flora Ann Bynum, *Secretary-Treasurer*
William Lanier Hunt, *Honorary President*
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